

# BASEBALL SCORES

## \$315 MILLION FROM RIGHTS

Teams earn millions more from in-house TV/radio deals, air fewer games on broadcast TV

By Harry A. Jessell and Kim McAvoy

**T**V and radio are doing their best to make sure the home-team players are well compensated for the Ks, HRs and RBI. According to BROADCASTING & CABLE's annual survey, Major League Baseball teams will receive nearly \$250 million from local broadcast stations and regional cable networks for the right to carry their games this season.

What's more, many teams will earn millions more through partnerships with local TV outlets or by producing games and selling the ad time themselves. Total revenue from such ventures should top \$250 million.

The local income comes in addition to the \$10 million each team receives from MLB's five-year national rights contracts with NBC, Fox, ESPN and the Fox Sports/Liberty joint venture. That deal is valued at \$1.7 billion.

The survey also found a significant drop in the number of games on broadcast TV—from 1,791 last season to 1,557 in 1997, a decrease of 234 games. (Last year's figure reflects what teams and stations said they would air at the beginning of the season, not what they actually aired.)

Much of the difference in over-the-air games (88) is due to the Texas Rangers. Last year, KXAS-TV Dallas-Fort Worth and the other station it manages in the market, KXTX-TV, aired 138 games. This year, they will air just 50 broadcasts.

More modest declines are reported for the New York Mets (77 to 52), Pittsburgh Pirates (15 to 10), San Diego

Padres (55 to 25), Detroit Tigers (56 to 40), Toronto Blue Jays (41 to 35) and Oakland Athletics (35 to 30).

Bucking the trend were the Florida Marlins. They will appear on broadcast TV 60 times this season, 10 more than last year.

And where did the broadcast TV games go? Many to cable. The survey found an additional 35 games scheduled for cable this year, a total of 1,745.

Most of the increase stems from the appearance of regional cable networks in the only five markets without such networks last year: Kansas City, Milwaukee, Dallas-Fort Worth, Denver and Los Angeles. The neophytes picked up 180 games.

But several teams posted significant increases in cable games: the Mets (75 to 100), Pirates (60 to 85), St. Louis Cardinals (40 to 50), Padres (40 to 100), Minnesota Twins (95 to 105) and Cleveland Indians (66 to 72). The Marlins matched their increase in broadcast games by adding 10 cable games.

The World Champion New York Yankees have long had baseball's most lucrative local deal. Because earnings of the partnerships and the do-it-yourself broadcasters are unknown, it is difficult to say which team is next in line. It could be the Baltimore Orioles. Earlier this year, the team agreed to supply games for CBS's WJZ-TV and its regional cable network, Home Team Sports, for more than \$20 million. WBAL(AM) Baltimore also signed a new three-year deal for the radio rights. It calls for annual payments of \$3.5 million.

It's surely more than CBS wanted to pay. But the net-



work had to outbid Fox and Liberty, which had moved in with the hope of displacing HTS. The result: a doubling of the rights fee.

If another team earns more, it's probably the Mets, which receive at least \$16.5 million in rights fees from SportsChannel New York and WFAN(AM). That comes on top of the earnings from their broadcast TV partnership with WWOR-TV. Revenue from that venture likely will exceed \$16 million.

The Chicago Cubs and the Atlanta Braves each generate \$50 million in revenue from the broadcast of their games over cable superstations WGN-TV and WTBS(TV), respectively. But much of the take is due to the stations' national, not local, coverage.

For a complete team-by-team breakdown of radio, cable and broadcast TV rights, see pages 29-30.



# COMING OUT OF A SLUMP

*Broadcast, cable and MLB are scoring big with advertisers this season*

By Kim McAvoy

**T**he players' strike is past and interleague play lies ahead. The broadcasters, cable networks and teams that will air thousands of games are bullish about the 1997 season.

Baseball appears headed for a financial comeback.

"Our sales are ahead of last year," says John Feeley, sports sales manager at KTVU(TV), the San Francisco Giants' flagship station, which will carry 58 games.

"We're noticing a more friendly attitude toward baseball. The last few years people have been angry about the labor problems. Now it's like it used to be. People are excited about baseball."

"The strike is behind everybody—people are happy to have business as usual," says Ron Goldberg, vice president and director of sales for ChicagoLand Television, which will air 11 Chicago Cubs games on the local cable network.

Sales are "up considerably" says John McGuinness, director of sports marketing for WPHL-TV Philadelphia, which has a revenue-sharing partnership with the Phillies. McGuinness says the team has also signed three new sponsors. WPHL-TV will air 84 games this season.

"We're getting back to where we were a few years ago," says Bill Haig, vice president of broadcast operations for WTMJ(AM) Milwaukee, which airs the Milwaukee Brewers. "We're expecting a very good year."

Sales for the Chicago White Sox already are "20 percent ahead of last year," says Jim Corno, a senior vice president for SportsChannel's regional networks. "We've had renewals from every sponsor last year." SportsChan-

nel Chicago will carry 97 White Sox games this season.

Corno thinks that last year's labor agreement "helped sales" and that the prospect of interleague play is adding to baseball's excitement this year. For the first time, MLB's American League and National League teams will play against each other.

Rivalries between such teams as the Cubs and White Sox will be a "shot in the arm for baseball. Those games will draw great viewership; those games will be an event," says Corno.

"Because we have crosstown rivals [San Francisco Giants], interleague play is a plus for us," says Jeff Krolik, general manager of SportsChannel

Pacific, which will carry 55 Oakland Athletics games.

"Interleague play is going to be different. It should be good sales fodder," says Rick Miner, of WWOR-TV New York, the TV flagship for the New York Mets that is slated to run 52 games, a drop from the more than 70 it aired last season.

Perhaps another sign that baseball ad sales are back on track is Madison Square Garden Network's purchase of the radio rights to the New York Yankees for the next five years.

The deal, sources say, is worth \$35 million. MSG chose WABC(AM) to broadcast the games. The radio station has held the rights to the Yankees games for the past 10 years.



## Fox loads the bases

The joint venture from Fox Sports and Liberty Media is stepping up to the plate this season, joining ESPN, Fox and NBC as national TV outlets for Major League Baseball. The venture's entry represents the last piece of baseball's current five-year, \$1.7 billion network TV deal.

In the first year of its \$172 million deal, Fox/Liberty will offer games two nights each week of the season. Fx, Fox's national cable network, will telecast a Monday night game, offering separate games for the East and West Coasts. The eight regional Fox Sports Networks will broadcast baseball on Thursdays, again with different games for each half of the country.

The Fox broadcast network, meanwhile, is entering the second year of its \$575 million contract. Fox carries the Saturday Game of the Week, and has the rights to the 1998 and 2000 World Series, and this year's and 1999's All Star games. It also has rights to carry five divisional playoff games a year and to split coverage with NBC on the league championships. Fox carried the World Series during its first baseball campaign last year.

NBC, which paid \$475 million for its package, has the World Series this year, the All Star Game in 1998 and 2000 (NBC carried last year's game) and three divisional playoff games per year. It splits the championship series with Fox.

ESPN paid \$455 million for its coverage of Wednesday and Sunday night games, and broadcasts of between six and 12 divisional playoff games that are not shown on Fox or NBC.

—JS



"My girlfriend says I'm superficial.  
She watches those documentary network series  
on the origins of the universe.  
I watch ESPNEWS, getting the full in-depth story  
behind Jerry Rice's seventh touchdown reception of the season.  
Now, you tell me who's superficial."

—Craig Mannion, *Marcus Cable customer*



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# LOCAL TV AND RADIO LINEUP

Team	BROADCAST TV						CABLE						RADIO					
	Flagship	# of reg. season games	# of stations in net.	Contract yr./yrs.	1997 rights	1997 est. revenue (millions)	Regional network	# of reg. season games	Contract yr./yrs.	1997 rights	1997 est. revenue (millions)	Flagship	# of stations in net.	Contract yr./yrs.	1997 rights	1997 est. revenue (millions)		
<b>NATIONAL LEAGUE EAST</b>																		
Atlanta Braves	WTBS(TV) (ch.17)	125	0	NA	NA	\$52	Fox Sports South	25	1/10	\$3	NA	WSB(AM) 750 kHz	181	3/5	\$3	NA		
Turner Broadcasting System owns team and WTBS.																		
Florida Marlins	WBFS-TV (ch.33)	60	9	1/1	NA	\$8.3	Sunshine Network/Sports-Channel Florida	35	1/1	\$1.8	NA	WQAM(AM) 560 kHz	181	3/5	\$3	NA		
Team retains broadcast TV rights. Marlins' owner Wayne Huizenga is managing partner in SportsChannel Florida. WCMQ(AM) broadcasts games in Spanish.																		
Montreal Expos	SRC(FR) TQS(FR)	20 20	7-12	3/4 3/3	NA	\$2.6	RDS(FR) TSN(ENG)	40 25	2/4	\$1.8	NA	CIQC(AM) CKAC(AM)	7 Eng 26 Fr	3/4 3/4	NA	\$1.3		
Team retains broadcast TV and radio rights.																		
New York Mets	WWOR-TV (ch.9)	52	NA	1/2	NA	\$16	Sports-Channel New York	100	11/30	\$13+	NA	WFAN(AM) 660 kHz	15	1/3	\$3.5	NA		
Team and WWOR-TV have revenue-sharing partnership. WADO(AM) will broadcast 81 home games in Spanish.																		
Philadelphia Phillies	WPHL-TV (ch.17)	84	2	5/5	NA	\$18	Prism/SportsChannel Philadelphia	42 25	7/7	NA	\$7.6	WPHT(AM) 1210 kHz	18-20	5/5	\$3	NA		
Team and WPHL-TV have revenue-sharing partnership for broadcast TV and cable.																		
<b>NATIONAL LEAGUE CENTRAL</b>																		
Chicago Cubs	WGN-TV (ch. 9)	140	0	NA	NA	\$47.9	ChicagoLand TV	11	NA	NA	\$0.6	WGN(AM) 720 kHz	50	NA	NA	\$12		
Tribune owns team, WGN-AM-TV and ChicagoLand TV.																		
Cincinnati Reds	WSTR-TV (ch.64) WKRC (ch. 12)	15 30	0	2/3 1/1	NA	NA	Sports-Channel Cincinnati	50	2/3	\$5	NA	WLW(AM) 700 kHz	60	2/3	\$3.5	NA		
SportsChannel Cincinnati pays \$5 million for broadcast TV and cable rights. It buys airtime on TV stations.																		
Houston Astros	KXTH(TV) (ch. 20)	50+	8-10	10/10	\$5	NA	Fox Sports Southwest	60	12/15	\$4	NA	KILT(AM) 610 kHz	50	2/3	NA	\$4		
Team retains radio rights. KXYZ(AM) broadcasts games in Spanish.																		
Pittsburgh Pirates	WPGH(TV) (ch.53) WPIT(TV) (ch. 22)	5 5	0	NA	NA	NA	Fox Sports Pittsburgh	85	1/4	\$4.3	NA	KDKA(AM) 1020 kHz	45-50	1/3	NA	\$3		
Fox Sports Pittsburgh pays \$4.3 million for broadcast TV and radio rights, sublicenses 10 games to TV stations. Team retains radio rights.																		
St. Louis Cardinals	KPLR-TV (ch. 11)	60	21	1/3	\$4-5	NA	Fox Sports Midwest	50	1/5	\$2-3	NA	KMOX(AM) 1120 kHz	101	1/5	\$4	NA		
<b>NATIONAL LEAGUE WEST</b>																		
Colorado Rockies	KWGN-TV (ch. 2)	95	12	5/5	NA	\$15	Fox Sports Rocky Mountain	7	1/10	NA	NA	KOA(AM) 850 kHz	57	5/8	\$4	NA		
Team retains broadcast TV rights.																		
Los Angeles Dodgers	KTLA(TV) (ch. 5)	48	0	1/5	\$15.5	NA	Fox Sports West 2	40	1/5	NA	NA	KABC(AM) 790 kHz	24	5/5	\$5	NA		
KTLA pays \$15.5 million for broadcast TV and cable rights. It sublicenses games to Fox Sports West 2. KWKW(AM) broadcasts all games in Spanish.																		
San Diego Padres	KUSI-TV (Ch. 51)	25	0	NA	NA	NA	Channel 4	100	1/5	\$4	NA	KFMB(AM) 790 kHz	2	1/3	\$3+	NA		
Cox Communications' Channel 4 pays \$4 million for broadcast TV and cable rights, buys airtime on KUSI-TV and shares revenue with team.																		
San Francisco Giants	KTVU(TV) (ch. 2)	58	7	3/6	\$5.5	NA	Sports-Channel Pacific	55	2/5	\$4.5	NA	KNBR(AM) 680 kHz	12+	3/5	\$4.5	NA		
Team retains five to seven 30-second spots per game on broadcast TV. KNBR is a limited partner in team.																		

Team	BROADCAST TV						CABLE						RADIO						
	Flagship	# of reg. season games	# of stations in net.	Contract yr./yrs.	1997 status	1997 rights (millions)	1997 est. revenue (millions)	Regional network	# of reg. season games	Contract yr./yrs.	1997 status	1997 rights (millions)	1997 est. revenue (millions)	Flagship	# of stations in net.	Contract yr./yrs.	1997 status	1997 rights (millions)	1997 est. revenue (millions)
<b>AMERICAN LEAGUE EAST</b>																			
Baltimore Orioles	WJZ-TV (ch. 13)	37	8	1/4	NA	NA	Home Team Sports	85	1/10	\$20+	NA	WBAL(AM) 1090 khz	29	1/3	\$3.5	NA			
CBS, which owns HTS and WJZ-TV, pays more than \$20 million for broadcast TV and cable rights. It sublicenses games to WNUV-TV and WBDC-TV Washington.																			
Boston Red Sox	WABU(TV) (ch. 68)	75	12-13	1/3	\$9+	NA	New England Sports Network	76	15/20	\$6	NA	WEE(AM) 850 khz	60	4/4	\$4.4	NA			
Team owns part of NESN, keeps some of its revenue.																			
Detroit Tigers	WBKD-TV (ch. 50)	40	6	3/5	NA	\$3.5	Pass Sports	70	5/7	\$3-\$4	NA	WJR(AM) 760 khz	30	2/5	NA	\$3.6			
Team retains broadcast TV and radio rights.																			
New York Yankees	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	MSG Network	100	9/12	\$52.5	NA	WABC(AM) 770 khz	12-14	1/5	\$7	NA			
At deadline, MSGN, which holds broadcast TV and cable rights, was negotiating broadcast TV deals with WBIS and WPIX.																			
Toronto Blue Jays	CBC	35	0	1/1	\$9	NA	TSN	80	2/5	\$6	NA	CJCL(AM) 590 khz	40	5/6	\$1.6	NA			
<b>AMERICAN LEAGUE CENTRAL</b>																			
Chicago White Sox	WGN-TV (ch. 9)	60	0	3/3	NA	\$15	Sports-Channel Chicago	97	14/17	\$4.5	NA	WMVP(AM) 1000 khz	30-35	2/5	\$3.5	NA			
Team and WGN-TV have revenue-sharing partnership. WIND(AM) airs all games in Spanish.																			
Cleveland Indians	WUAB(TV) (ch. 43)	70	3	2/3	\$6	NA	Sports-Channel Ohio	72	2/3	\$5	NA	WKNR(AM) 1220 khz	35	1/3	NA	\$7.4			
WUAB holds broadcast TV rights, shares revenue with team. Sportschannel holds cable rights, but team keeps nine spots per game. Team retains radio rights.																			
Kansas City Royals	KCWB(TV) (ch. 32) KMBC-TV (ch. 9)	35 15	0	NA	NA	NA	Fox Sports Rocky Mountain	38	1/3	\$4-5	NA	WIBW(AM) 580 khz	106	3/3	1.8	NA			
Fox Sports Rocky Mountain pays \$4-5 million for broadcast and cable rights, buys time on KMBC-TV, which controls KCWB through local marketing agreement.																			
Milwaukee Brewers	WVTW(TV) (ch. 18)	68	5	1/1	NA	NA	Wisconsin Sports Network	35	1/1	\$5.3	NA	WTMJ(AM) 620 khz	46	2/5	NA	\$5.9			
Wisconsin Sports Network pays \$5.3 million for broadcast TV and cable rights, shares some revenue with team. Team retains radio rights.																			
Minnesota Twins	WCCO-TV (ch. 4)	40	0	5/5	\$7.5	NA	Midwest Sports Channel	105	5/5	NA	NA	WCCO(AM) 830 khz	66	5/5	NA	NA			
CBS, which owns WCCO-AM-TV and Midwest Sports Channel, pays \$7.5 million for all TV and radio rights.																			
<b>AMERICAN LEAGUE WEST</b>																			
Anaheim Angels	KCAL(TV) (ch. 9)	51	0	2/5	NA	\$11.2	Fox Sports West	32	3/5	\$5	NA	KMPC(AM) 710 khz	15	NA	NA	\$6-\$7			
Disney, which owns team, retains broadcast TV rights, sharing revenue with KCAL. Disney also owns KMPC.																			
Oakland Athletics	KRON-TV (ch. 4)	30	5-8	5/5	\$5	NA	Sports-Channel Pacific	55	2/5	\$5.3	NA	KFRC(AM) 610 khz	18	4/4	NA	\$4			
Team retains radio rights.																			
Seattle Mariners	KIRO-TV (ch. 7)	59	7	3/3	\$7.5	NA	Fox Sports Northwest	55	1/4	\$4-5	NA	KIRO(AM) 710 khz	35	5/5	\$3.7	NA			
KIRO-TV holds broadcast TV rights, but team keeps revenue from soft drink spots.																			
Texas Rangers	KXTX-TV (ch. 39) KXAS-TV (ch. 5)	35 15	20-25	2/5	\$7	NA	Fox Sports Southwest	60	1/4	NA	NA	KRLD(AM) 1080 khz	60	1/1	\$4.5	NA			
LIN Television, which owns KXAS-TV and operates KXTX-TV, pays \$7 million for all TV rights. It sublicenses games to Fox.																			

NA—Not applicable or not available. Unless otherwise indicated, the teams sell the rights to a broadcast station or cable network and the 1997 rights fee is shown. In cases where the team retains the rights or is involved in a partnership, estimated 1997 revenue is shown instead of a rights fee. Depending on the team, contract status refers to a rights contract, partnership contract or contract for a non-rightsholder to carry the games. In most cases, broadcast TV and radio rightsholders form regional networks—the column shows the number of stations in those networks. Radio stations usually carry all regular-season games.